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Tuna Noodle Casserole from Scratch

By Samantha Skaggs • January 11, 2024 •

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Tuna Noodle Casserole from Scratch is a quick and easy recipe loaded with tuna, egg noodles, peas, and a creamy, cheesy, homemade white sauce. That's right...this is a recipe for tuna casserole without soup!



stovetop
tuna
noodle
skillet



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When I need to get dinner on the table in a flash but didn't exactly plan ahead, I often find myself throwing together a one-pot, stovetop recipe based around ground beef. But *{gasp}*...sometimes there's nary a pound of ground beef to be found in the fridge or freezer! And on those occasions, it's nice to have a recipe in my arsenal that relies on a common, nonperishable, pantry staple instead. Canned tuna just so happens to be perfect for making Tuna Noodle Casserole from scratch!

Who didn't eat tuna casserole as a kid? I remember my mom making it, and I remember enjoying it. But for some reason, I've only sporadically thought to cook it for my own family over the years. So a few weeks ago, when I had one of those *it's-5-o'clock-and-I-don't-have-anything-planned-for-dinner* moments of panic, I spied two cans of tuna in the pantry...and it was easy Tuna Noodle Casserole to the rescue!

I decided I wanted to keep things as simple as possible and assemble everything on the stove rather than popping a dish in the oven.

I also wanted said simple recipe to be homemade, with nary a can of condensed *cream of X* to be included...AKA, tuna casserole from scratch and *without soup!*

How to Make Tuna Noodle Casserole from Scratch

So I put a big pot of water on to boil and got the egg noodles going while I started a basic bechamel sauce in another skillet.

I know, I know...*bechamel* sounds all fancy and frou-frou and French.

But y'all...it's so, so easy. In fact, it involves nothing more than **melting butter, whisking in flour, and ultimately adding milk** to make a creamy, dreamy white sauce.





Once the sauce was thick and silky, I **seasoned it and stirred in a big handful of grated cheddar cheese plus two cans of drained tuna.**

In the meantime, my noodles were almost done, so I **dumped some frozen peas into the boiling pasta water** to cook for the last minute or two.

Then I **drained the noodles and peas, stirred them into the cheesy, tuna-flecked, white sauce...**



...and sprinkled the whole skillet with a mixture of crushed butter crackers and grated Parmesan.

In less than 20 minutes, dinner was on the table!





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The BEST Easy Tuna Casserole

So did my kids love this from-scratch Easy Tuna Noodle Casserole as much as I recall enjoying the recipe from my childhood? Well, both of my boys scarfed it down. And my (*pickypickypicky*) daughter actually allowed it to occupy space on her plate. Believe me...that's a win around these parts.

But the greatest affirmation came later that evening, when I went to put away the paper where I'd scrawled down the recipe as I made it. I saw that my 9-year-old had written "YUMMY" at the bottom, along with a big smiley face and his signature. *Hey, it's not often that something I cook garners legit graffiti on my recipe notes.*

With Lent upon us, my family will be avoiding meat on Fridays and putting Tuna Noodle Casserole from Scratch into regular rotation instead. But I have no doubt that this recipe's popularity at our house will continue long

after Easter!

After all, such an easy, tasty, comforting meal deserves to be enjoyed year-round! I mean, I've got recipe graffiti to prove it. 😊

Tips, Tricks, & Equipment

- You may use your favorite type of canned tuna, but I prefer water-packed to keep the calories down. I also prefer chunk light (skipjack/tongol) over chunk white (albacore) because of lower mercury levels.
- The way the recipe is written is the fastest way to make it. However, if you don't mind it taking a little longer and you'd prefer to conserve on dirty dishes, you can make everything in the same pot. Start out by boiling the noodles and peas (as directed) in a large pot or Dutch oven.

Drain them into a colander, rinse with hot water, and set aside. Then proceed with the recipe by melting the butter in the same pasta pot and making the white sauce (as directed). Finally, add the noodles and peas back to the pot at the very end.

- The first time I made this easy Tuna Noodle Casserole recipe, we really enjoyed the addition of fresh parsley. But I didn't have any on hand when I made the recipe again and took the pictures for this post. So parsley is included as an option in the recipe...even though it's not shown in these photos.





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Tuna Noodle Casserole from Scratch

Easy Tuna Noodle Casserole from Scratch is an easy, from-scratch dinner recipe loaded with tuna, egg noodles, peas, and a creamy, cheesy, homemade white sauce for tuna casserole without soup!

By [Samantha Skaggs](#)

Course: Main Course **Cuisine:** American

Prep Time: 5 minutes **Cook Time:** 15 minutes

Total Time: 20 minutes **Servings:** 6 servings **Calories:** 468kcal



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Ingredients

- 8 ounces extra-wide egg noodles
- 2 cups frozen peas
- 2 ½ tablespoons butter

- 2 ½ tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 ½ cups milk, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 cup (4 ounces) freshly grated cheddar cheese
- 2 (6-ounce) cans tuna, drained and flaked
- 3 tablespoons freshly chopped parsley, optional
- ½ cup crushed butter cracker crumbs, optional
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, optional



Cook Mode Prevent your screen from going dark

Instructions

- 1 Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the egg noodles and cook per package directions. A minute or so before the noodles are done, add the frozen peas to the boiling water. Once the noodles are cooked to your liking, drain the noodles and peas and set aside.
- 2 While the noodles are cooking, set another large pot, pan, or skillet over medium heat. Add the butter and swirl until melted. Stir in the

flour and continuously whisk for 2 minutes. Continue to whisk vigorously as you slowly and gradually pour in the milk. Stir until smooth and bring to a simmer, whisking regularly to prevent the bottom from burning. Cook for a minute or two until the sauce has thickened. Remove from the heat, stir in the salt, garlic powder, and pepper. Gradually blend in the cheddar until melted, and then stir in the drained tuna and the parsley, if using.

- 3 Stir the drained noodles and peas into the sauce and mix until everything is well coated. If desired, combine the cracker crumbs and the Parmesan in a small bowl and evenly sprinkle the mixture over the entire skillet. Serve immediately.

Video

Notes

- The way the recipe is written is the fastest way to make it. However, if you don't mind it taking a little longer and you'd prefer to conserve on dirty dishes, you can make everything in the same pot. Start out by boiling the noodles and peas (as directed) in a large pot or Dutch oven. Drain them into a colander, rinse with hot water, and set aside. Then proceed with the recipe by melting the butter in the same pasta pot and making the white sauce (as directed). Finally, add the noodles and peas back to the pot at the very end.

Nutrition

Calories: 468kcal | **Carbohydrates:** 45g | **Protein:** 29g | **Fat:** 19g |
Saturated Fat: 10g | **Cholesterol:** 98mg | **Sodium:** 849mg | **Potassium:**
481mg | **Fiber:** 3g | **Sugar:** 9g | **Vitamin A:** 1130IU | **Vitamin C:** 22mg |
Calcium: 342mg | **Iron:** 3mg



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Cynthia Pahel says:

July 17, 2023 at 4:58 pm

Just made this for dinner tonight. I loved how quick and easy it was to make. I had to use what I had on hand for substitutes, but it worked! I used almond milk, frozen broccoli instead of peas, and nutritional yeast for the grated Colby. My husband, absolutely loved it, and he is a far cry from a health nut. Thank you so much for this recipe! I will be making it often.

[Reply](#)

diana says:

August 22, 2022 at 2:21 am

Hi! I have been given some smoked salmon...will it work in the white sauce ? Thanks!

[Reply](#)

Samantha Skaggs says:

August 24, 2022 at 12:24 pm

I don't see why not! 😊

Reply

Kansas says:

February 2, 2022 at 4:24 pm

Super simple.i used almond milk instead of real milk due to allergies and no cheese . The sauce came out creamy and like it would if used with normal milk. I also added a bit of onion and garlic to my melting butter. My kids loved it .

Reply

Denise Aubut-Legarde says:

September 24, 2021 at 8:49 pm

Can I replace egg noodles with spaghetti in this dish?

Reply

Samantha Skaggs says:

September 27, 2021 at 8:20 am

Hi Denise! You can swap out the pasta in this recipe, but if necessary, just be ready to make slight adjustments during cooking to the liquid ratio and cooking time. 😊

Reply

Dianne B. says:

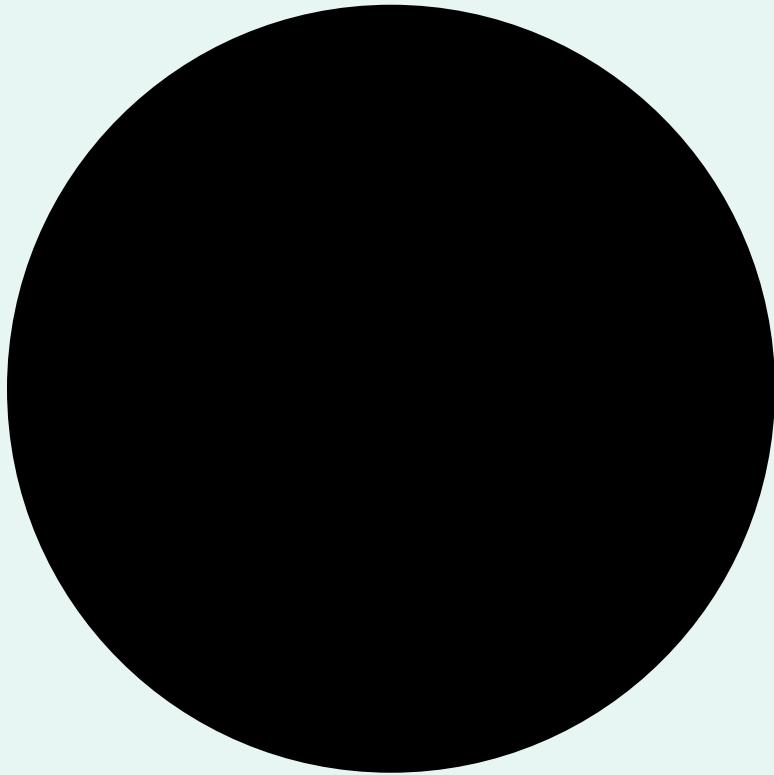
April 10, 2021 at 7:17 pm

I don't eat tuna because of the mercury . So I substituted Costco Kirkland

Wild Alaskan Pink Salmon (boneless and skinless). It came out absolutely delicious!

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Hi, I'm Samantha!

I'm a busy mama of 3, a cookbook author, and a full-time food blogger.

I love creating quick and easy, family-friendly, real food recipes to share with y'all and make your lives easier. Yummy, wholesome meals don't have to be difficult or require a lot of time...let me teach you my tips and tricks!

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